

A range extension for the Cipó Canastero *Asthenes luizae* and the consequences for its conservation status

by Marcelo Ferreira de Vasconcelos,
Santos D'Angelo Neto & Marcos Rodrigues

Received 27 June 2000

The Cipó Canastero *Asthenes luizae* is a neotropical ovenbird (Furnariidae) described in 1990 from a small and isolated population inhabiting a mountain top of Serra do Cipó in southeast Brazil (Pearman 1990, Vielliard 1990). The genus *Asthenes* is distributed in the Andean-Chacoan-Patagonian region of South America, and its discovery in the mountains of Southeast Brazil represents evidence of a zoogeographic connection among these regions (Vuilleumier *et al.* 1992).

For some years after its discovery, *A. luizae* was known only from the type-locality, named 'Alto da Boa Vista', 19°17'S, 43°34'W, municipality of Santana do Riacho, Minas Gerais State (Fig. 1). The place is a < 10 km² rocky outcrop at Serra do

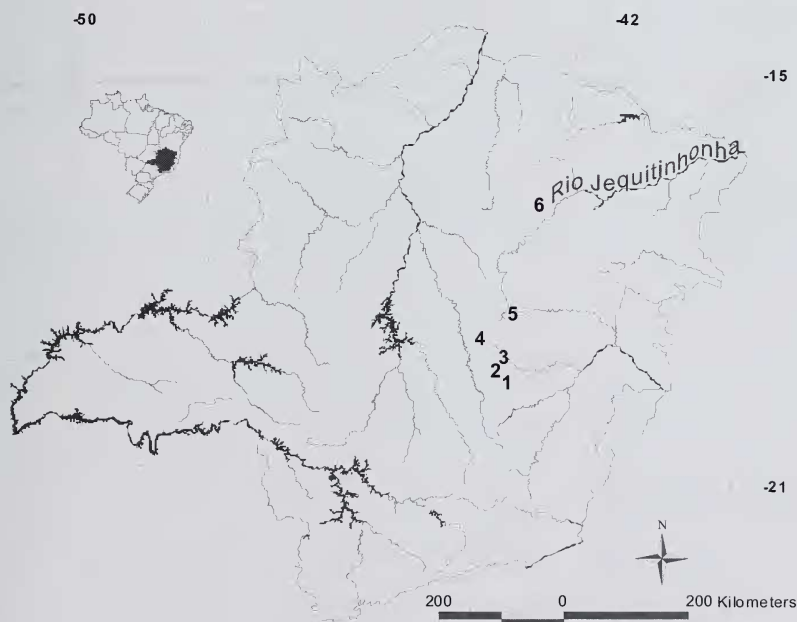


Figure 1. Map of Minas Gerais State showing localities of records for the Cipó Canastero *Asthenes luizae*. 1 Serra do Cipó National Park; 2 Alto da Boa Vista, Serra do Cipó; 3 Ribeirão do Campo waterfalls; 4 Campo Alegre; 5 Capivari; 6 Campina do Bananal.

Cipó (Collar *et al.* 1992). This fact led Collar *et al.* (1992) to include the species in *The Threatened Birds of the Americas: the ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book* on the premise that the species inhabits "...as yet only a tiny area within the Serra do Cipó, Minas Gerais, Brazil, where it faces possible threats from cattle-grazing, fires and brood-parasitism". This was highly, if not all, based on the scanty information presented in Pearman (1990) and Vielliard (1990). Due to the total lack of data on its range and population status, *A. luizae* is officially considered as 'Vulnerable' in Brazil (Andrade 1998).

A few years later, Andrade *et al.* (1998) and Cordeiro *et al.* (1998) published new records of the Cipó Canastero. These records extended its range 100 km north, and also recorded it within the Serra do Cipó National Park (Table 1). All these records lie south of the Rio Jequitinhonha Valley (Fig. 1). Here however, we describe the occurrence of a population of *A. luizae* north of Rio Jequitinhonha Valley, and discuss the consequences of such a discovery for its conservation status.

On 29 February and 1 March 2000 we undertook field work in Campina do Bananal, 16°51'S, 43°02'W, a 900–1,400 m plateau of the Espinhaço Range in the municipality of Botumirim, north of Rio Jequitinhonha Valley, Minas Gerais State (Fig. 1). We used binoculars to watch the birds and two mist nets along 8 h of ornithological survey in this area. The vegetation of this plateau is characterised by typical 'campo rupestre' where abound Bromeliaceae (*Encholirium* sp., *Tillandsia* sp., *Vriesea* sp.), Cactaceae (*Pilosocereus* sp.), Clusiaceae (*Kielmeyera* sp.), Ericaceae (*Agarista* sp.), Eriocaulaceae (*Paepalanthus* spp.), Melastomataceae (*Lavoisiera* sp., *Microlicia* sp., *Tibouchina* sp.), Orchidaceae (*Habenaria* spp., *Oncidium* sp., *Stenorrhynchos* sp.), Poaceae (*Chusquea* sp.), Velloziaceae (*Barbacenia* sp., *Vellozia* spp.), and Verbenaceae (*Stachytarpheta* spp.).

On 1 March 2000 we found a dead Cipó Canastero in one of our mist nets at 1,320 m elevation. The specimen was deposited in the Coleção Ornitológica do Departamento de Zoologia of the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (DZUFMG), Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais State, under registration no. DZUFMG 2855. On the same day, we heard and observed three other individuals within an area of 450 m² around our campsite. One of them was foraging on the rocky outcrop among bushes of *Tibouchina* sp. Although we did not tape-record its vocalizations, their songs closely resembled those from the type-locality (see Vielliard 1995).

The bird collected at Campina do Bananal, a male, had brown iris, grey tarsi and black bill with grey on its base. The measurements taken are: mass 30.5 g, total length 186.0 mm, wing 70.0 mm, tail 95.0 mm, tarsus 27.1 mm, culmen 17.6 mm. These measurements are similar to those of the holotype deposited in 'Museu de Zoologia da Universidade de São Paulo', registration number MZUSP 73831. The type-specimen, another male, measures: wing 69.9 mm, tail 89.6 mm, tarsus 24.4 mm, culmen 19.5 mm. Some plumage features of these two specimens differ. The back of DZUFMG 2855 is dark grey, rather than dark greyish-brown in the holotype MZUSP 73831. Furthermore, the belly of the specimen from Botumirim is grey, while in the holotype it is greyish-brown, and the superciliary stripe of DZUFMG 2855 is more conspicuous

and more greyish. The significance of this variation is unknown. Unfortunately the paratype is not deposited in a public collection and its access is more difficult. DZUFMG 2855 was a young bird, with 25% cranial ossification.

This record extends the Cipó Canastero's range c. 170 km to the north of its former known range (Fig. 1). It is possible that other populations of *A. luizae* will be found even further north, in the 'campos rupestres' of Serra do Barão and adjacent mountains in the municipality of Grão Mogol.

We could not assess if this population of *A. luizae* is under threat. We did not record the Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*, a possible brood-parasite according to Vielliard (1990) and Collar *et al.* (1992). Cattle-grazing occurs at Campina do Bananal, but the locality is not yet within the tourist route, although an incipient program of 'eco-tourism' had been started.

As the number of professional ornithologists and birdwatchers grows in Brazil, new localities for endemic and even new taxa are being discovered. For instance, from 1983 to 1998, 17 new bird species were described in Brazil. Of those, 14 species were found in localities close to densely populated parts of eastern Brazil (Vuilleumier *et al.* 1992, Raposo 1997, Sick 1997, Bornschein *et al.* 1998, Coelho & Silva 1998). Some of these recently found taxa have been sometimes assigned as threatened simply due to lack of information, as has happened with *A. luizae*. *A. luizae* is apparently endemic to the Espinhaço Range (Ridgely & Tudor 1994, Silva 1995, Sick 1997, Stattersfield *et al.* 1998), but these mountains have not been surveyed in a systematic way. More extensive studies of this species' geographical range and variation are needed to assess its true status.

Acknowledgements

We thank Genilson A. Ferreira for his collaboration with our field work in northern Minas Gerais State. Cássio S. Martins (Fundação Biodiversitas) and Andrei L. Roos (Universidade Federal de

TABLE 1

Localities of records of the Cipó Canastero *Asthenes luizae*.

Locality	Municipality	Coordinates	Elevation	Source
Alto da Boa Vista, Serra do Cipó (type-locality)	Santana do Riacho	19°17'S, 43°34'W	1,100 m	Vielliard (1990)
Serra do Cipó National Park	Jaboticatubas	19°23'S, 43°33'W	1,185- 1,300 m	Andrade <i>et al.</i> (1998), Cordeiro <i>et al.</i> (1998)
Ribeirão do Campo waterfalls	Conceição do Mato Dentro	19°05'S, 43°33'W	1,100 m	Cordeiro <i>et al.</i> (1998)
Campo Alegre	Santana de Pirapama	18°48'S, 43°53'W	1,000 m	Cordeiro <i>et al.</i> (1998)
Capivari	Serro	18°26'S, 43°25'W	1,100 m	Cordeiro <i>et al.</i> (1998)
Campina do Bananal	Botumirim	16°51'S, 43°02'W	1,320 m	Present study

Minas Gerais) prepared the map. MFV is grateful to CAPES, WWF, and USAID for financial support during his master course. MR has a fellowship by the Brazilian Research Council (CNPq). The Laboratory of Ornithology of UFMG is supported by 'Vallourec-Mannesmann Florestal', 'Fundação O Boticário de Proteção à Natureza' and PRPq-UFMG. We are indebted to Luís F. Silveira for enabling us to study the holotype at the Museu de Zoologia da Universidade de São Paulo.

References:

- Andrade, M. A. 1998. *Asthenes luizae* Vielliard, 1990. Pp. 306-308 in Machado, A. B. M., Fonseca, G. A. B., Machado, R. B., Aguiar, L. M. S. & Lins, L. V. (eds.), *Livro vermelho das espécies ameaçadas de extinção da fauna de Minas Gerais*. Fundação Biodiversitas, Belo Horizonte.
- Andrade, M. A., Andrade, M. V. G., Gontijo, R. G. R. & Souza, P. O. 1998. Ocorrência do Cipó-canastero (*Asthenes luizae*) e do Gavião-pernilongo (*Geranoospiza caerulescens*) no interior do Parque Nacional da Serra do Cipó, Minas Gerais. *Atualidades Orn.* 82: 10.
- Bornschein, M. R., Reinert, B. L. & Pichorim, M. 1998. Descrição, ecologia e conservação de um novo *Scytalopus* (Rhinocryptidae) do sul do Brasil, com comentários sobre a morfologia da família. *Ararajuba* 6: 3-36.
- Coelho, G. & Silva, W. 1998. A new species of *Antilophia* (Passeriformes: Pipridae) from Chapada do Araripe, Ceará, Brazil. *Ararajuba* 6: 81-86.
- Collar, N. J., Gonzaga, L. P., Krabbe, N., Madroño Nieto, A., Naranjo, L. G., Parker, T. A. & Wege, D. C. 1992. *Threatened birds of the Americas: the ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book*. International Council for Bird Preservation, Cambridge, UK.
- Cordeiro, P. H. C., Melo Junior, T. A. & Vasconcelos, M. F. 1998. A range extension for Cipó Canastero *Asthenes luizae* in Brazil. *Cotinga* 10: 64-65.
- Pearman, M. 1990. Behaviour and vocalisations of an undescribed Canastero *Asthenes* sp. from Brazil. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 110: 145-153.
- Raposo, M. A. 1997. A new species of *Arremon* (Passeriformes: Emberizidae) from Brazil. *Ararajuba* 5: 3-9.
- Ridgely, R. S. & Tudor, G. 1994. *The birds of South America*. Vol. 2. University of Texas Press, Austin.
- Sick, H. 1997. *Ornitologia Brasileira*. Editora Nova Fronteira, Rio de Janeiro.
- Silva, J. M. C. 1995. Biogeographic analysis of the South American Cerrado avifauna. *Steenstrupia* 21: 49-67.
- Stattersfield, A. J., Crosby, M. J., Long, A. J. & Wege, D. C. 1998. *Endemic bird areas of the world: priorities for biodiversity conservation*. BirdLife International (Conservation Series 7), Cambridge, UK.
- Vielliard, J. 1990. Uma nova espécie de *Asthenes* da serra do Cipó, Minas Gerais, Brasil. *Ararajuba* 1: 121-122.
- Vielliard, J. 1995. *Guia sonoro das aves do Brasil, CD 1*. Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Campinas.
- Vuilleumier, F., LeCroy, M. & Mayr, E. 1992. New species of birds described from 1981 to 1990. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 112A: 267-309.

Addresses: Marcelo Ferreira de Vasconcelos, Coleção Ornitológica, Departamento de Zoologia, ICB, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, C.P. 486, 31270-901, Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil, e-mail: bacurau@mono.icb.ufmg.br; Santos D'Angelo Neto, Departamento de Biologia Geral, Universidade Estadual de Montes Claros, Av. Rui Braga, s/nº, 39401-089, Montes Claros, MG, Brazil; Marcos Rodrigues, Departamento de Zoologia, ICB, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, C.P. 486, 31270-901, Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil. E-mail: ornito@mono.icb.ufmg.br.